

CAUGHEY
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250th Anniversary

of the

First Friends Meeting House

in

Moorestown, N. J.

September 16, 1950

1700

1950

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250th Anniversary Program

Ninth Month 16, 1950

4.00 p. m. Emmor Roberts, Chairman

Local History

by George DeCou Jean C. Hollingshead

Personalities William Bacon Evans

Address Governor Alfred E. Driscoll

6.00 p. m. Picnic Supper on the Lawn

(Ice Cream available)

Exhibit of Old Historical Material in the Social
Room.

7.30 p. m. Meeting for Worship

Address:

“Independence as a Quaker Tradition”

Henry J. Cadbury

Introduction

This anniversary invites us to measure a way of worship, and a place of worship, against the passage of two hundred and fifty years. The beginnings, at this road crossing, which then was a forest clearing, came in minds and hearts looking for light. They found it.

Two and a half centuries later we still look to the same source for light in our own confused world.

Articles of Agreement

found in Chester Preparative Meeting Folder in the Archives at 302 Arch Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

“Articles of Agreement Indented, Made and Agreed upon the ninth day of the second month 1700 Between John Hollingshead, Matthew Allen, John Adams, Wm. Hollinshead, James Adams, Thomas French, Joseph Heritage, Thomas Wallis, John Cooperthwait, Wm. Matlocke, Sarah Roberts, Richd. Heritage, all of the Township of Chester in the County of Burlington in the Province of West New-Jersey, yeom Thomas Hutton and Timothy Handcock both of the Town of Evesham in the County aforsd yeom in maner following That is to say—

“Whereas the said parties (being all of the people of God call'd Quakers) have heretofore voluntarily Contributed & Collected among themselves the sum of seventy one pounds fourteen shillings (or thereabouts) Current Money in the sd Province for the purchase of an Acre of Land of the aforsd James Adams and for the building of a Meeting House thereon for the Worshipping of God in Spirit & in Truth which said Acre of Land is already purchased and the sd house built accordingly.”

The above document was read to the Anniversary Meeting by C. Walter Borton. He was one of a group of Friends dressed in authentic Quaker costume of the period 1700 to 1900.

Local History

An historical sketch of early Friends' activities was read by Jean C. Hollingshead. Marion W. Lippincott prepared this from material provided by George DeCou, our beloved Friends' Historian.

John Greenleaf Whittier, our Quaker poet, has said,

“How thrills once more the lengthening chain
of memory,

Old hopes which long in dust have lain,
Old dreams come thronging back again.”

Today we are reviewing these memories of meetings held long ago. To glimpse into the past may bring us new hopes, new heights and aspirations for the future.

Let us turn to old writings and see the years of yesterday. The first meetings for worship in the vicinity of Moorestown were held in the home of Timothy Hancock on the north branch of Pensauken Creek, above Camden Avenue. This meeting was authorized by the Burlington Monthly Meeting held on “ye 9th of 9th mo 1685”. Friends met at Timothy Hancock’s home and John Keys (Kays) house, located near Ellisburg, on alternating weeks. The earliest meeting held on the site of the present Moorestown, of which there is a record, was an appointed meeting held by Thomas Story in the home of John Adams on First Month 19th, 1700. (It should be remembered that March was the first month under the Julian calendar. The calendar changed from the Julian to the Gregorian in Great Britain and her colonies in 1752.) This meeting is recorded in Thomas Story’s Journal. John Adams’ house was doubtless on the Salem Road or King’s Highway, now Main Street.

4. John Adams owned 500 acres, east of the present Burlington County Trust Company, formerly owned by Dr. John Rodman of Rhode Island. John Adams divided the plantation between his sons Thomas and James, the latter taking the western half. James Adams conveyed one acre of his farm to the Society of Friends early in 1700. This lot is located at the corner of Main Street and Chester Avenue, formerly called the "Great Road or Meeting House Lane." The James Adams' deed reads in part as follows: "This Indenture made the Ninth day of the Second Month Commonly Called April in the Twelfth Year of the Reign of William the Third of England Scotland France and Ireland King &c Annoq Domini 1700, Between James Adams and hester his Wife of the one part and John Hollinshead and others." It continues "In Consideration of the Sume of fourteen Shillings lawfull Money in Sd province . . have granted Bargained Sould and Confirmed all that Acre of Land . . . Together with all that House or Building now erected & being upon the said Acre of Land and called the Quaker Meeting House."

The meeting then established was frequently called the "Adams Meeting." These friends were advised by Philadelphia Yearly Meeting to "Keep to Plainness in Apparel as becomes the Truth." None were supposed to "wear long-lapped Sleeves or Coats gathered at the Sides or Superfluous Buttons or broad Ribbons about their hats or long curled Periwiggs. Women must be careful about making buying or wearing strip'd or flower'd Stuffs or other useless and superfluous Things." The log or frame meeting house, which these families attended, stood near the granite marker at the corner of Main Street and Chester Avenue. It was burned in 1719 and a stone meeting house was erected in the following year. In a minute of Newton Monthly Meeting, dated Tenth month 1719 we learn that several friends signified their willingness to give their assistance provided this monthly meeting approved of it. The meeting considered their necessity and gave consent

“to their accepting of what friends that are in Unity are willing to give toward building the Same.”

Chester Meeting was under the Newton Monthly Meeting at that time. A stone meeting house was erected on the site of the log building in 1720. This meeting house faced Main Street but doubtless there was an entrance from Chester Avenue. The horse sheds were located back of the meeting house and extended to the bank property. According to tradition in the Warrington family, Henry Warrington set out the Buttonwood tree on Main Street near the bank in 1740, in order to have a place to tie his horse when he came to meeting. Prior to the Revolutionary War women, as well as men, travelled mostly on horseback. The hoods and cloaks worn by the Quaker ladies must have been made of sturdy stuff to keep the chill winter winds without. The men wearing beaver hats, muslin cravats and knee britches jogged along through the narrow roads with their families. Stormy weather was not used as an excuse to keep them from Meeting. How many of us blame the elements when we fail to drive to the meeting house door in our enclosed automobiles?

The Friends Meeting House was the only place of public worship in Moorestown for a period of one hundred and fifteen years. In 1815 the Methodists built a small church building in the front yard of the property west of the present Community House. It would be a very interesting landmark if standing today.

Chester Meeting was under Newton Monthly Meeting until 1722; under Haddonfield from 1722 to 1760, when Eveham Monthly Meeting was established and under Evesham until 1803, when Chester Monthly Meeting was organized. Quaker historians usually agree that Chester Preparative Meeting was established in 1760.

The earliest Preparative Meeting book at 302 Arch Street begins with the year 1785. The earlier book cannot be located.

The stone meeting house served the community for eighty years, when Friends in the neighborhood began to consider its enlargement or the building of a new meeting house. The following committee was appointed to consider the matter: John Roberts, John Collins, Robert French, Abraham Rakestraw, Jacob Hollinshead, Samuel Roberts, Isaac Roberts, Abraham Warrington, William Evans and Samuel Roberts, Jr. Without doubt these friends are ancestors of many of us gathered here together today.

The committee reported that "they were generally united in proposing the South Side of the road near the East end of the Friends School House for the place to build sd House." This same committee reported proposing a building "60 feet by 40 feet with a partition across same & that it be built in the year 1802." The meeting decided to build of brick and calculated the cost "not less than 1000 pounds."

The report further stated, "We likewise propose that the little meeting house be taken down, and such parts of the other as may be convenient to take out and leave the walls standing, so it may accommodate us while the new one is building." The "little meeting house" referred to perhaps was the frame extension added to the stone building for the Women's Preparative Meeting. Into their separate meetings went the men and women. It is not difficult to imagine that the girls drew their shawls about them and peeped coyly from beneath their bonnets when the men's meeting broke. Their colored aprons of green and blue were being left off now and white ones used. The young men returned shy glances while they stood in long overcoats which were long collarless garments of heavy cloth. Below hung their pantaloons or trousers. The range of color in Quaker clothing seems to have been early limited to the browns and grays.

At the Time of the unfortunate separation in the Religious society of Friends in 1827-8, the meeting house property was retained by the "Hicksite

Friends." However, title to the old graveyard at the corner of Main Street and Chester Avenue apparently was never surrendered by either branch and several years ago it was placed in the hands of joint trustees. The "Orthodox Friends" retained possession of the old stone schoolhouse, erected in 1785, that formerly stood on the site of the Elementary School building. The western wall of the old school may be seen in the Elementary Building at the present time.

7. In Tenth Month 1828, the West Meeting group had removed to the schoolhouse for their monthly and preparative meetings and probably for their meetings for worship. They erected a frame meeting house in 1839 with the following committee in charge: George Matlack, Joseph Matlack, and David Roberts.

This committee "Proposed building a frame building 34 by 40 feet with 15 feet story . . . with basement story to accommodate the School & to hold preparative meeting in. And the schoolhouse to be taken down and such materials as are suitable made use of in completing the Basement story." (Apparently the schoolhouse was not taken down at that time or there may have been a school building that is unknown today.) The estimated cost was \$1500 but like today, the actual cost was greater. In First month 1840, the committee reported that the total cost of the meeting house and two stoves was \$1770.28. The frame meeting house was enlarged in the 1880's.

The older members of the West Meeting will remember the frame meeting house which stood on the site of the present brick building. The old house met the needs of the "Orthodox Friends" until 1896, when the question of building a larger meeting house was laid before the Preparative Meeting. It is interesting to note that a meeting house of greater size was needed. Unfortunately that is not our problem of today. Times were ever changing and

so were the styles in dress. It has been said that there was a tendency for the Quakers to follow the dictates of fashion even at a safe distance. The collars on the men's coats were details of consideration. Their collars crept up by imperceptible degrees until the middle of the nineteenth century. It took the coat collar a full two hundred years to rise to its greatest height and fall in the snare of a worldly roll.

At the session held on Twelfth Month 31st, 1896, the following committee was appointed to care for the building of the meeting house: William Evans, George Abbott, Elisha Roberts, Amos E. Kaighn, Joseph Lippincott, David Comfort and Joseph Walton. The committee was instructed to unite with a committee of Women Friends. About two months later Samuel L. Allen, Henry W. Moore and Uriah Borton were added to the committee.

At the Preparative Meeting held on Sixth Month 3rd, 1897, a minute records, "That the meetings for worship on Firstdays to be held in the brick meeting house will be at 3 p. m. and on Fourthdays at 10 a. m. after the meeting house was demolished." The Race Street Friends, ever courteous, apparently offered the use of their meeting house while the Arch Street Friends were homeless. Homeless days or heatless days have helped to unite us in closer friendship.

On Sixth Month 30th, 1897, William Evans informed the meeting that the contract had been let to John L. Rogers. Exactly one year later the building committee made its final report showing that the total cost of the West Meeting House and furnishings was \$15,708.47. This amount was almost nine times the cost of the meeting house built 58 years before. Don't you imagine there were some friends who deplored the high cost of living and the extravagance of such a house of worship? The Quaker philosophy of costume and life is essentially in the direction of plainness and moderation.

The two meeting houses and the Elementary School Building stand on a lot purchased from Ephraim Haines in 1781. As early as 1746 the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting "desired Friends in their several Monthly meetings to encourage and assist each other in the settlement and support of schools for the instruction of their children, at least to read and write. Many of the children of Friends previous to that time were brought up without instruction in school, and even those in comfortable circumstances, in several country places, for want of convenient schools never learned to either read or write."

It is difficult to state when the first school was established by Chester Meeting in Moorestown. An Evesham Monthly Meeting minute reads: "In 1779 the Monthly Meeting of Evesham, to which Chester belonged, noted that a school was opened at Chester but not yet any prospect of procuring a lot of ground for that purpose." Probably the school was held in the stone meeting house at the corner of Main Street and Chester Avenue until 1785 when the stone schoolhouse on the site of the Elementary School was erected.

Probably the brick schoolhouse near the Had-donfield Road, known as Chester Brick School, was erected prior to the stone schoolhouse in Moorestown. This building remained standing until about 1935 when it was burned. It stood on the Salem Road near the old Matlack homestead. In 1785, the following friends were appointed "to have the Care and Oversight of the friends school near William Matlack: Samuel Roberts, Jonas Cattell, Joseph Roberts and Reuben Matlack." At the time of the separation in 1827-8 the "Hicksite Friends" retained possession of the school property and it was used by them until 1872. In that year it passed into the control of the county and was used as a public school until 1917 when it was sold to Joseph Matlack.

Chester Preparative Meeting in 1786 appointed the following friends to have the care and oversight of the Friends School in Moorestown: "Jacob Hollinshead, John Collins, Joshua Hunt, Robert French, John Roberts and Samuel Roberts, Jr." In Eighth Month of the same year the committee reported that there had been "a good degree of Order preserved in Said school." During the following year the Trustees remarked with a degree of sorrow "that the House has been vacant for a considerable time."

3 The Friends Academy, now the Elementary School, was established in 1878. Richard Cadbury, a graduate of Haverford College, was the first Principal of the Academy. He was followed by Edward Forsythe, Walter L. Moore, William J. Blackburn and William F. Overman. When William Overman became Principal in 1892, the Academy Building consisted of the old stone schoolhouse with the second story addition and the brick addition on the northern side.

4 The Friends School on Chester Avenue had its origin shortly after the division of the Society of Friends in 1827-8. This school was under the care of the "Hicksite Friends" and in 1859 it was called for the first time "Friends Frame School." Apparently it too met with adversities and was closed in 1871 while four years later the trustees said, "The school has been kept open for the past four months taught by a person in membership."

The first Kindergarten School in Moorestown was established by the "Hicksite Friends" in the Fall of 1883. Rachel L. Rogers, who studied under Madame Kraus, a pupil of Froedel, was the first teacher. Sara Wilson, who afterwards married Nathan Conrow, was engaged to assist her in 1885.

The uniting of the Friends Academy and the Friends High School on Chester Avenue in 1920 had the happy result of bringing the two branches of Friends into closer Christian Fellowship. W. Elmer

Barrett was the first principal of the united schools and under his leadership the experiment proved highly successful. Elmer Barrett was succeeded by Chester L. Reagan in 1925. Under his guidance the Academy building was enlarged and improved in many ways and in 1929 the present Friends High School building was erected. The High School building on Chester Avenue was abandoned and the lot sold to the Federal Government for a Post Office. The Moorestown Friends School with the moral and financial support of the two meetings has quickly assumed a leading position among the educational institutions of South Jersey.

To accommodate members living somewhat remote from Chester Preparative Meeting, Westfield Meeting was begun. The first meetings for worship were held in the Lower Chester Schoolhouse in 1794 and a meeting house was built in 1800. Their first school was taught by Abraham Warrington in his home near Fork Landing, probably in the year 1785. A few years later a school was erected on a lot purchased from Samuel Shute.

At the time of the separation, the "Hicksite Friends" retained the meeting house property and school building. The "Orthodox Friends" erected a frame meeting house on Branch Pike in 1848 and a schoolhouse a little west of it. At the present time the two branches meet together in the meeting house on the road to Moorestown, erected in 1859. The original meeting house built in 1800 unfortunately was destroyed by fire, on Third Month 20th of that year.

With this we close the records which have renewed the lengthening chain of memory. Old hopes and dreams have come thronging back again. Many of these dates and details will soon be forgotten but the spiritual influence of these sincere, earnest Friends will live forever. Let us turn our interest now to the time yet to come, because we shall spend the rest of our life in the future.

Personalities

by William Bacon Evans

This title—Personalities—suggesting as it well might Gossip—will, we trust, not be entirely unacceptable to the womanly part of our audience. Indeed, as La Fontaine said, “I know a number of men who in that respect are women.”

Our aim then, will be to select some notable characters, associated more or less definitely with Moorestown, and with the available facts—or what we take to be facts—endeavour to make these Friends live again.

We would not unnecessarily curtail our list. Nor would we in any sense deal lightly with the dead, for in general they were a people desperately in earnest. The Welsh proverb: “Y Gwir yn erbyn y byd”—“Truth against the world” might well have been their life motto. It is loyalty to Truth that makes people noble and valiant. It is that which makes worth while the holding of a meeting like this.

What was the Truth for which these men and women stood? We venture to affirm that it was the Christian Faith—Faith having a two-fold relevance. On the one hand it acknowledges historic Christianity, with its Bible. On the other hand it emphasizes individual experience of God and his immediate guidance. Not separately, nor exclusively, but together and unitedly, these two constitute a balanced Faith for they are one.

Let it be confessed that at times Friends have see-sawed, now emphasizing first this side, and now that. Yet in both Branches there have always been those who preached and practiced the full Gospel message.

I have selected for notice a dozen Friends who visited Moorestown, and in addition a second dozen residing at or near Moorestown. If I devote one

minute to each I shall have exhausted my time and possibly even the audience.

Let us note first a Quaker youth, but 25 years old, who having been persecuted in Maryland, is starting on foot with two companions on the perilous and little known track to the Dutch settlement at New Amsterdam and so on to New England. It is the fall of the year 1658. The youngk man is **Josiah Coale**, of England. He is a minister, whose voice—accounts say—was like thunder, and his words like lightning. The cannibalistic Susquehanna Indians, whom they encountered, were more kind to them than the New England Protestants proved to be. Several Indians accompanied them for 200 miles through the forests. The party cut down chestnut trees to procure sustenance. In addition the Indians shot a deer for them. Finally one Indian went with them the remaining 100 miles to the Dutch settlement. These were the first Friends to pass through what we now know as New Jersey.

Fourteen years later, or in 1672, a bulky person with a considerable company, similarly pass, but these are on horseback. It is **George Fox** with a party also bound for New England. Having crossed from New Castle Delaware, they took a more easterly course than Coale, and with the help of Indian guides found their way to Middletown in East Jersey. Doubtless Fox had learned from Josiah Coale about this all but uninhabited country, where there were no prosecuting justices, no tithing priests, no foul dungeons,—but forests, rivers, great bays, swamps, and lands, waiting to be occupied.

Going south, on their return journey, Fox and his companions crossed the Delaware River at Chigoe's Island, near the site of the present city of Burlington. Hence the apostle of Quakerism was once near to us.

Three years pass, and in 1675, another party of horsemen are journeying south. They are led astray by an Indian, and have to retrace their course back

to the Raritan River. Here they pick up the right trail, and separating, two of them come at length to the Falls of the Delaware near the site of the present Trenton. They find here an Indian man, woman and boy. For some "wampumpeg" the man is willing to set them across in his canoe. The river is wide, but swimming their horses, they go safely over.

Of the two Friends, one is the ex-Cromwellian soldier, **William Edmundson**, the apostle of Quakerism to Ireland. He is now on his second visit to America, and, on account of the Indian wars in New England it is a very perilous time. But his journey is safely accomplished.

For variety let us next have a Scotchman. Although not tall he makes up for all in learning. He is versed in the classics, knowing Greek and Latin, and is skillful in mathematics, logic, and above all in disputation. After the founding of Philadelphia he has come to East Jersey in part to escape the penalties for teaching school without a bishop's license, for **George Keith**, although once a Presbyterian, has long been a Quaker. He finds the Friends of New Jersey and Pennsylvania in general rather crude, and unlettered, and alas, (so he concludes) not sufficiently "orthodox." And so George starts a new Society, "The Christsian Quakers" and many flock to him. Soon, he goes back to England. Failing to gain the sympathy of Friends on that side of the Atlantic he joins the Episcopal Church, and comes again to America to persuade all Quakers to become Episcopalians. At the home of Will Heulings, near Heulings' Mount, (that eminence which rivals Mount Laurel), George Keith, in his clerical robes, preached on John 1:9, sometimes called the Quaker text. One wonders what he said. Let him retire to his poor living in Suxsex, where, in 1716, rheumatic and embittered, he died.

There comes before us next a courtly convert from the Church of England. He has had legal training and was once a swordsman. He still lets

his hair grow long, or is that a wig he wears? None-the-less he is now a devout Quaker, and an able minister. **Thomas Story**, for that is his name, is persuaded by William Penn to use his legal talent in the new colony for issuing patents and in adjusting claims. And so Thomas remains for awhile in America. Meanwhile he marries the daughter of Edward Shippen, Philadelphia's richest merchant. James Logan would like to have had her. Alas, the beautiful Ann Shippen Story soon sickens with consumption and dies.

Thomas Story continues his civic duties, and travels in the ministry. Finally he goes to the Barbadoes and other West Indian Islands, and thence to England, never to return here. Once, in 1699, while on his way from Burlington to Philadelphia, he attended a meeting at the home of John Adams, father of James Adams, remembered as the one-time owner of the land where Moorstown's first Meeting House stood. At that time a strong Keithian expected to cavil, but Thomas Story handled his matter in such a way that the opponent had nothing to object to.

We shall now introduce a sea-captain, recalled by Whittier as "Gentlest of Skippers, rare sea saint." **Thomas Chalkley** was, from his 28th year, a bulky person. Recently he had a fall from his horse. This lamed him but he still travels and preaches. In 1741 he was at Adams Meeting, in the stone house which stood opposite us. While in this neighborhood he was present at the marriage of ancestors of William Henry and Ezra Evans, and he signed the marriage certificate. This certificate is here on exhibit today.

Thomas Chalkley was uniformly sweet and gentle, even in controversy. Because he had preached to negroes, a slave owner once peppered him with bird shot. Although urged to prosecute the assault, Thomas refused, and upon due acknowledgement, freely forgave his assailant.

That **John Woolman**, of Mount Holly, ever visited Moorestown, so far as I can ascertain, we have no

documentary evidence. Since however he had a sister, Elizabeth, in Haddonfield, and another sister, Patience, married to Joseph Moore at Moorestown, and since the main highway of that time would pass through Moorestown, we may well suppose that he was here and attended meetings. A document dated 12:V:1759, signed by him for John Darnell, late of Evesham, is among the exhibit items. It is the property of William E. and Anna M. Darnell, and is kindly loaned for this occasion.

What! A Friend with a beard? Yes, **Joshua Evans**, of Haddonfield, bore that distinction. His facial appendage was a sore trial to some of his friends, just as the absence of one would be to the Amish. Although as a minister Joshua spoke acceptably, Friends delayed to recommend him for 13 or 14 years. When he felt that he should visit England, "way did not open," and in consequence Joshua felt excused. He was a true friend to the poor, and to the Indians at Indian Mills, repeatedly taking provisions and blankets to them. In harvest time he paid six pence per day more than others, with the understanding that he would not furnish his laborers with any liquor. He himself partook of no tea, coffee, sugar or molasses. In 1797 he attended Moorestown meeting. Since he was a warm friend of John Hunt, it is likely that he came here often.

And now let us introduce a famous preacher from Long Island. He is tall, erect and spare, wearing a broad-brimmed hat, and is buttoned up in the straightest nonconformity. **Elias Hicks** has a commanding presence, and his long hair is brushed straight back.

He is the able and fluent foe of slavery and of the slave-trade. He opposes Bible societies and agricultural societies. He objects to dabbling in politics. Above all he opposes fundamentalism. His one theological message is the Inward Light. He visited Moorestown in 1798, and again in 1823, when he preached for an hour or more in this very house



Photo by William H. Roberts

Friends Meeting Houses and School, taken in 1897 from near the site of the present Kindergarten building.

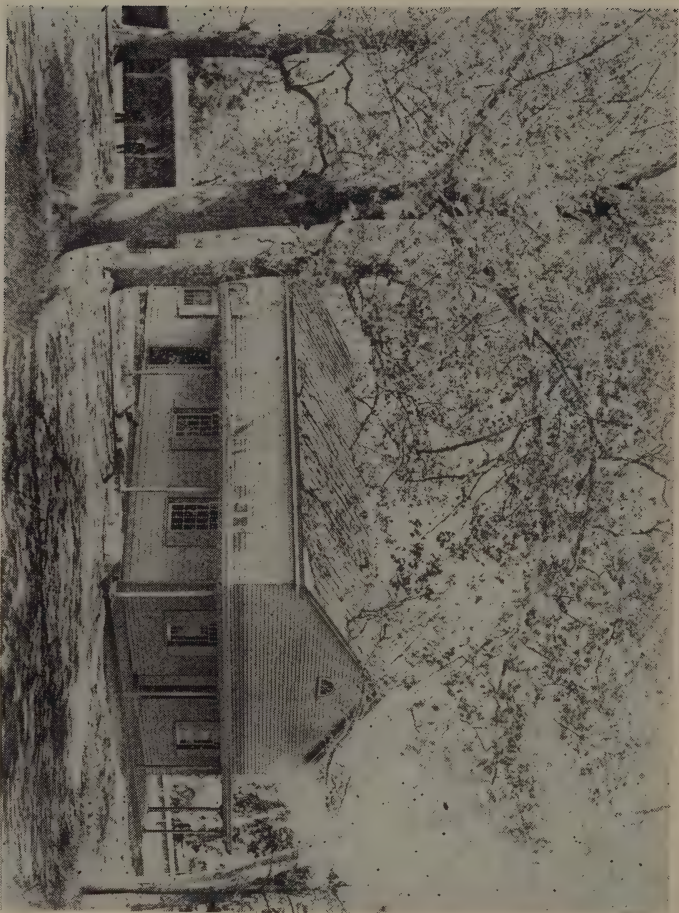


Photo by William H. Roberts

Friends (Orthodox) Meeting House 1897



Photo by William H. Roberts

Friends (Orthodox) Meeting House built in 1897 and still in use.

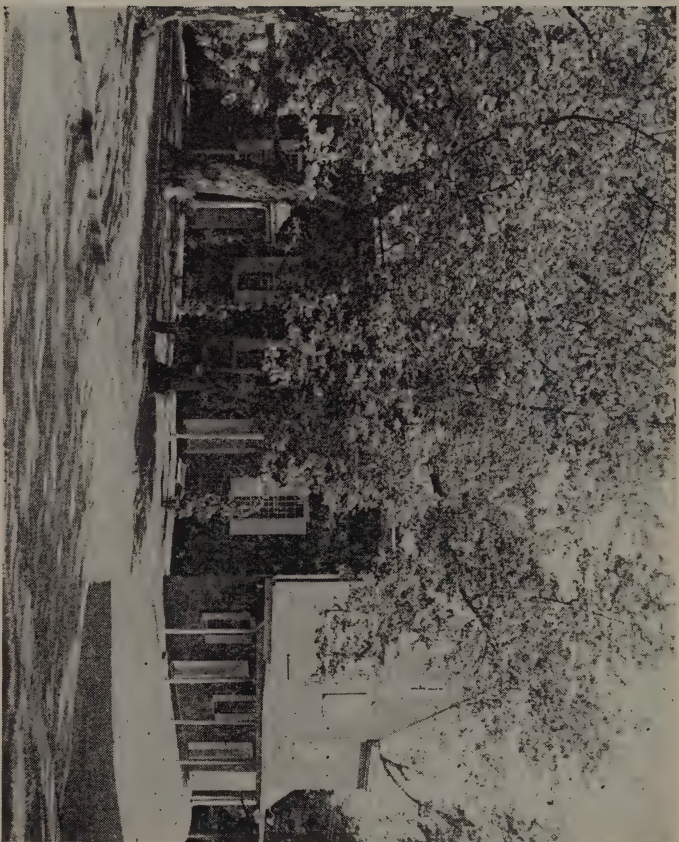


Photo by Moorestown Studio

Chester Monthly Meeting (Hicksite), 1950. Erected in 1802 and still in use.

where we now are.

Before he was 12 years old, **Richard Jordan**, of Virginia, had been at meeting only a few times. Although his schooling had been very limited, he later travelled as a minister in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland, as well as in Germany, Holland and republican France. In his ministry, he used to commence very hesitatingly, as if he had little to communicate. But gathering strength, he grew more and more animated. Rising on his toes, and falling again, he became a Boanerges, thundering on his way.

With William Forster, Jr., of England, and another Friend, he spoke in this house in 1823. His death occurred in his home in Camden, New Jersey, in 1826.

The next figure to appear before us is a man of rather low stature. Like Elias Hicks, in dress he is severely plain. This Friend is a London shoemaker, **Thomas Shillitoe**. He is naturally bashful, nervous, and timid as a hare. His diet is as singularly plain, as his dress. He eats neither fish, flesh or fowl. But he has had extensive religious service, and in spite of his timidity, he has talked with the president of the United States, the king of England, and the czar of all the Russias. The last mentioned potentate presented Thomas with a Bible, inscribed in his own hand.

Now, following the Separation of 1827, Thomas is visiting Moorestown. Race and Arch Street Friends are still holding their meetings for worship together in this house. When the time for the business meeting arrives, Race Street Friends transact their business first, Arch Street Friends sitting quietly by, till they have finished, when they in turn transact their own concerns. In general the feeling between the two branches here in Moorestown has been more cordial than in some other areas, and while Race Street Friends kept the meeting-house,

and while Arch Street Friends disowned all Race Street members, yet the latter always allowed Arch Street Friends to hold their larger meetings here until they had a sufficiently large house of their own.

The last of the visitors on our list is our one and only Yankee, **John Wilbur** by name, from Hopkinton, Rhode Island. Although he is now 78 years old, he is going for a second time to England, contending for what he considers primitive Quakerism. Like Elias Hicks he opposes Fundamentalism, but John at the same time upholds Orthodoxy.

In Moorestown he visits only the Orthodox meeting. He is the principal opponent of John Joseph Burney, English theologian, and brother of Elizabeth Fry. Wilbur is the champion of the so-called Wilburite Friends, a conservative groupage which still exists.

* * * *

Having now travelled through nearly two centuries, we find that Quakerism, from being a free nascent, dynamic, expanding and overcoming religion, has become somewhat static, narrow, crystalized; too introspective and self-centered. Let us therefore turn the hands of the clock backward and consider some of Moorestown's own people.

It is fitting that we begin with **John Hunt**, living near Fellowship, but attending meetings here. He is a minister, much engaged in preaching and visiting families, as well as looking after the poor. In addition to being a farmer, he is a pump-maker, joiner, cabinet-maker, wheelright, cooper and shoe-maker. A cousin of John Woolman, he is much concerned at the innovations which he sees creeping into our Society, the new shiny carriages, the broadcloth suits, the excessive use of liquor, and intermarriages with the world's people. He is the one Friend in this neighborhood, whose journal, kept from 1770 to 1824, is well known. As he records the droughts, floods, frosts, blights, epidemics, attacks by mad dogs, and especially the ravages of the Revolution-

ary War, he sees God's just judgments upon man's forgetfulness. Dare we say that he was wholly wrong? He died before the separation, and till his death he seems to have welcomed appreciated visiting Friends, whatever their theological gackground.

Should I apologize for not until now introducing a single woman? Here at length is indeed a valiant one, Esther Roberts Hunt Collins. Born near Moorestown she was twice married. Large, able, vigorous and resourceful, she is the ancestor of many families now living here, Roberts, Williams, Richie, Hunt, Cooper and others. With her first husband, Joshua Hunt, she removed to Redstone, Pa., then a frontier settlement. Among Friends there she was a useful Elder. In 1791, William Rogers and John Hunt, when on their way to Ohio, stopped at her Pennsylvania home, and found John was somewhat timerous about proceeding. Ahead were desperate roads, swollen streams, wild beasts and Indians. In spite of her six children, one a few months old, in spite of her cares and duties in the new community, she said, "I will go with you," and she mounted her horse and went. Her death whic hoccurred in 1820, was also unusual. After she had returned to Moorestown, when 68 years old, she agreed to go with Ann Edwards, a minister, Nancy E. Stokes and Henry Warrington, Jr., to Byberry, Pa., to visit the widow of Peter Yarnall, he a deservedly loved minister recently deceased. The ice on the Delaware gave way, Hnry sprang out, and hld Nancy, who was in the icy water, until help arrived. Meanwhile the two women on the back seat, with the horses and carriage had disappeared. Later the bodies were recovered, and were buried in the quiet lot opposite us. Undoubtedly the two worthy women were ready to go.

Another sterling Moorestown Friend was **Mary Shoemaker Lippincott**, nee Hallowell. She was a favored minister, and a schol-teacher of 59 years experience. With her husband, she opened a boarding-school at Moorestown, in 1842. In 1845 she became the efficient clerk of Philadelpiha Yearly

Meeting of Women Friends, Race Street. When she died in Camden, New Jersey, she was in her 87th year.

Mary S. B. Roberts can tell you how the girls from "Aunt Mary's" school use d to walk two and two to midweek meeting, and how, one day, classes were dismissed, so that all night watch Tom and Minnie Thumb drive by in their tiny coach.

Born near Medford, New Jersey, one of a large family, **Zebedee Haines**, by the grace of God was an outstanding Christian and minister. He was no man's copy. With a subtle sense of humour, he yet seemed to walk always in the presence of God. Just to be in his company was a memorable experience. A Haverford graduate, he taught school in Moorestown, and here several of his children were born. As Principal of Friends' Select School, Philadelphia, and as Superintendent at Westtown School, his influence was widely felt. He said, "When I was young I was very particular how I parted my hair. Now that gives me less difficulty." For he became very bald. He was never known to repeat himself in his sermons, and he never failed to rouse the best in his hearers.

Once, desiring to know what the Bible taught about the resurrection of the body, he opened it at the 15th chapter of 1st Corinthians. There he read "...but are the dead raised, and with what body do they come?" "Now," he thought, "I shall learn what I wish to know." Turning to the next verse, he read, "Thou fool." "That is for me," he said, and closed the Book. The latter part of his life was mostly spent on a farm near West Grove, Pa.

Stoddell Stokes, grandfather of our Doctor Joseph Stokes, having purchased a horse, saddle and saddle-bags, started west in 1816 to prospect. He travelled as far as New Orleans, Louisiana. There he took ship and returned home after a year's absence. His observations convinced him that there

were opportunities for a young man right at hand in Pennsylvania. He settled at Stroudsburg, where he opened a store, a flour mill and a woolen mill. He also engaged in rafting logs down the Delaware. He started a newspaper, and became president of Stroudsburg Bank. For five years he was judge advocate of Monroe County, and was active in helping slaves to freedom. He died in Moorestown in his 99th year.

In 1829, **Dr. Joseph Warrington**, of Philadelphia, conceived the idea of a lying in charity. He became the sole director, and had a dozen nurses who visited indigent expectant mothers in their homes. In 1832 the organization received a charter, and a Nurses' Society was formed in 1839.

Overwork compelled Dr. Warrington relinquish these responsibilities, and he retired to Moorestown for rest and recuperation. His *Obstretic Catechism*, containing 2,347 Questions and Answers Proper, testifies to his wide experience. He is said to have assisted some 2000 babes into this world of joy and anguish. He had his own ideas, meeting his classes for nurses at 6 a. m., and enjoying a large dish of raw cucumbers, smothered in cream. Yet he lived to his 84th year.

Joseph Walton, graduate of Haverford, was for 10 years a teacher of Westtown School. Later he became a manufacturer of furniture, including—in case of need—coffins. He was Editor of the *FRIEND*, (a Quaker periodical), and for many years clerk of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, Arch Street. He was also a botanist, and took an active interest in Meeting affairs, and in people generally. Of a placid disposition, he would brush off a swarm of mosquitoes, saying mildly, "Go away, little fellows," with as much complacency as he would quiet disturbances in Yearly Meeting.

After cultivating country acres and Jersey children, **Emmor Roberts** retired to Moorestown. The

story is told that one Hallowe'en, he spied a boy, who by the help of a ladder was placing Emmor's front gate high in a maple tree. After watching the lad's efforts for a time, Emmor said, "Harry, I think thee has done a remarkable piece of work to put the gate up there. How would it do now to bring it down?"

Emmor Roberts was for 15 years clerk of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, Race Street, and for 30 years a member of the Board of Swarthmore College.

Samuel L. Allen made his start as a farmer near Westfield. As early as 1866, he experimented with two metal basins, attached with a clasp. These rotating, when pushed by handles and mounted on a carriage, spread fertilizer, or distributed seed evenly. The device was named "Planet Jr." Later, a sled, the "Flexible Flyer," was patented. A manufacturing plant of considerable size eventuated. Improved models of these and other similar inventions by Samuel Allen are enjoyed by young and old to this very day. He was always generous with the ample means which resulted from his inventions.

George Abbott. Born at Salem, New Jersey, he became the founder of Abbott's Alderney Dairies. As a young man George Abbott had the ambition to become a millionaire. He relinquished this goal, but retained a zest for business. In his efforts to obtain good milk legislation, he acquired, at Trenton and Harrisburg, the sobriquet "Quaker Fighter." In Meeting affairs he was a recorded minister, a member of the Committees of Friends' Academy, of Westtown School, as well as serving as a member of the Meeting for Sufferings. He was a born promoter, and became the first president of Pocono Manor Inn, and founder of Friends' Meeting at Orlando, Florida. He was much interested in procuring "hardy Palms" for city planting at Orlando.

The last Friend we shall notice, **T. Chalkley Matlack**, might well have ben a farmer, but, as a boy, running out to see his father, he fell down in front of the horses. The fright thus experienced,

turned his attention in another direction, and he became a teacher. But he had many interests, among which were genealogy, and the biographies of Friends, photography, the history of Meeting-houses, and portrait painting.

In questioning elderly women about their antecedents, etc. he used, when parting, to pause on the threshold, and say, "By the way, would thee be willing to give me thy age for my records?" If the door banged, he could at least make good his escape.

At the time of the blizzard in 1888, desiring not to fail in his school appointment, he walked the 9 miles to 15th and Race Streets, Philadelphia. He was following the railroad track, and desiring to leave it for a clearer path out in the fields, he plunged into snow up to his neck.

Scarcely anyone recognized the artistic skill he had in making portraits. Those who consult his work, preserved at Haverford College and elsewhere, will marvel at his gift.

* * * *

With the happy reunion of the two branches of Friends, to which with deep emotion we all look forward, shall we not hope that from Moorestown shall continue to go forth, honest tillers of the soil, educators, inventors, and heralds of the Gospel?

Moorestown is not, like Trenton, a State Capitol, nor an ocean resort, like Atlantic City, nor a port of entry like Burlington, nor a manufacturing centre like Mount Holly. It has produced no first magnitude saint like John Woolman. It has not even a school for feeble-minded like Vineland. It did not have an origin as romantic as that of Haddonfield. All of which to-the-contrary-notwithstanding, may Moorestown always be a place of happy Christian homes, and a centre of a going, out-going, growing and out-growing, altruistic Religious Society of Friends, one and undivided.

Address

by

HONORABLE ALFRED E. DRISCOLL

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY

This celebration of 250 years of organized Quaker worship in Moorestown is of great significance not only to the Friends but also to our State as a whole. It was through the tenacious adherence of the Friends to principles in which they believe, that New Jersey and America as well became fully aware of the social importance of religion and religious philanthropy. It was the Quakers who expressed the broader humanitarian impulses of the eighteenth century, just as they are still in the vanguard of movements to alleviate human suffering, to improve conditions in public institutions, and to rehabilitate lands and peoples from the ravages of war.

Small in number but great in influence, the Friends have contributed freely to the growth of New Jersey. Our historic State, one of the founding members of the Republic, was greatly influenced by the Quaker insistence upon liberty of conscience and promotion of democratic ideals so characteristic of the Society of Friends.

It was Quaker spirit and action, led by William Penn, which liberated the thinking of large sections of our people from the bonds of medievalism—and without firing a single shot. At least a century ahead of his time, Penn carried his religion into his government by establishing freedom of religion, guaranteeing the liberties and rights of the common man, and planning for a cooperative international organization of the nations of the world.

The area of New Jersey in which we live, largely as a result of Quaker influence, may well be called

the cradle of modern American liberties. It was in a little known document bearing the spiritual imprint of the Friends who wrote it, known as "The Concessions and Agreements of the Proprietors, Freeholders and Inhabitants of the Province of West New Jersey, in America," that we find the first formal expression (in 1676) of the fundamental liberties which later became the substance of our Bill of Rights.

The Concessions established complete freedom of religion, jury trial and modern rights of an accused, restricted imprisonment for debt, and provided for popular election of a "General Free Assembly." The Concessions also provided for a secret ballot and for the punishment of corrupt election practices. It is hard to believe that these great expressions of conscience and democracy preceded our Federal Bill of Rights by more than a century!

Like all great religious movements in history, the Society of Friends has influenced the thought and action of men having little or no attachment to the church, as well as its most devout members. In addition to the "elder statemen," William Penn and John Woolman, the Quaker poet, John Greenleaf Whittier, stands out as an interpreter of Friends' thought. He was perhaps as influential as any single individual in the Abolitionist movement. The Quaker influence is also evident in the work of Thomas Paine, James Fenimore Cooper, Walt Whitman, and even Ralph Waldo Emerson, a product of the New England Quaker environment.

Several of these great names, as well as many other first settlers of New Jersey, and their dependents, are part of the annals of Friends' Meetings in Burlington County. It is particularly fitting that here in Moorestown the County Historical Society was founded in 1915 to preserve the rich traditions which the Friends have done so much to establish. As Whittier himself said:

“The tissue of the Life to be
We weave with colors all our own,
And in the field of Destiny
We reap as we have sown.”

The Society of Friends, in both Meetings at Moorestown has a glorious past in citizenship as well as in religion. As an expression of faith and as a way of life, Quakerism has done as much for the civil community as for the individual spirit. Our troubled world needs more of both from more people in more ways.

"Independence as a Quaker Tradition"

AN ADDRESS

by

HENRY J. CADBURY

HOLLIS PROFESSOR

OF DIVINITY, HARVARD UNIVERSITY

and

CHAIRMAN, AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE

A memorial occasion like the quarter millenium of a Friends Meeting demands as a suitable subject one that belongs both to the past and to the present. It would be easier to confine attention to the past, as the historical papers have done, for as is often said "the past is secure." Yet we feel present demands acutely and we wish to meet them, so that some applicability to the present is appropriate. In the Greek and Latin languages the present tense of the verb in certain connexions is used to express that which began in the past and continues in the present. This is not our English habit, but the combination for which the Greeks have an idiom is precisely the combination for an occasion like this.

No doubt many features of Quakerism lend themselves to this kind of treatment. Even somewhat distinctive elements of Quakerism are numerous. Our philosophers and historians have happy hunting in trying to define the essential, the peculiar, the distinctive, or the continuous feature of our Society past and present. If their answers vary, that does not show that all but one are wrong. We are justified in selecting one feature and tracing it through the past and applying it to the present.

There is much reason to recall today the independence of Quakerism. Not only have many of the local worthies in this town illustrated in their lives a singular independence not to say eccentricity of character; but for three hundred years and in other places as well Friends have been conspicuously non-conformist. They represent a protesting attitude. Historically they may be described as the extreme left wing of Protestantism. Even when they began they had a tradition of independence behind them. Some of the groups in England and on the Continent that preceded the rise of Quakerism just three hundred years ago were "come-outers," as even their names or nicknames show—Separatists, Puritans, Independents, Sectarians, Seekers. To this tendency the Society of Friends fell heir, as well as to many specific forms of dissent and different practice. It was an age when men revolted against external authority and hoary tradition. Small groups and individuals became a law to themselves, "every man did that which was right in his own eyes." They did not wait until they could carry others along with them, but they stepped out in front. As one writer entitled his plea it was for "Reformation without Tarrying for Anie." They represented the spirit of exploration in the world of religion much as Columbus and his contemporaries did in the realm of geography. In fact they were among the settlers of the New World.

Obviously there is something paradoxical in speaking of independence as a tradition. Conformity can be a tradition, but how can non-conformity? How can one say that Quakerism inherited a tradition of independence or itself perpetuated such a tradition? Surely the heresy of one day becomes the orthodoxy of the next. Representatives of the established churches inevitably look askance at Quakerism because we sit so loose to tradition. We Friends have been accused of "historic ingratitude" or even historic ignorance. Our critics cannot understand a religion whose genius is precisely the con-

tinuity of change. There is a living Christianity which not only in the middle of the First Century but also in the middle of the Twentieth "turns the world upside down." How different a standard this is from the medieval formula—**Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus**, "What is held always, everywhere, by everyone." True independence does not rest on past won emancipation, to settle down into smooth conformity. It must be continually on the alert lest it become the good that is "the enemy of the best."

In listing the testimonies of early Friends their negative character comes out startlingly. Independence was in their case marked by a whole series of "Thou shalt not's." No tithes, no priests, no paid ministry, no programmed services, no outward sacraments, no sacred days—such were some prohibitions of their ecclesiastical position. In their social or secular life there were similar resemblances to the decalogue. Thou shalt not take any oath even a true one; thou shalt not kill even in war; thou shalt not have two prices in business; thou shalt not say

"you" to one person, even to one socially superior, nor doff the hat, nor scrape, nor bow the knee. These are only part of the early list, and later Friends added more "Do not's"—like slavery and liquor. This negative character of Quakerism cannot be underestimated or explained away. Revolt, refusal, non-compliance are unpleasant, uncooperative sounding practices. They still have their place in moral reform. "Learn to say no" is a safeguard inculcated in many of us when we were young. Perhaps it was unevenly pressed but it is the correlative of learning to say yes.

What can be equally emphasized about all the negatives of Quakerism is that they grow out of positives. At least they should do so, though inevitably some of us are made most aware of the good by our sensitiveness to the evil. Everyone of the Quaker "Do not's" arises from a positive "Do." If we worship in spirit and in truth we shall not worship by

form or by proxy. If we heed that of God in ourselves we shall not yield to the spirit of pride or of servility to others, or double standards of speech or of business. Even our refusal to hold slaves or to engage in war is due to a higher and positive loyalty superior to the conventions of the economic and social milieu in which we live and superior even to the demands of the State. Just three hundred years ago this autumn George Fox began the first of his many imprisonments, an imprisonment which was doubled in length because he refused to accept a captaincy in the army. The reason he gives in the well known passage is not so much that war is wrong or irrational, or that the Royalist soldiers do not deserve to be resisted and killed, or that their human lives are sacred; but that he, George Fox, lived and stood in that life and power which removes those lusts and desires which cause war. His answer is negative as to military support, but it is positive in its underlying loyalty. One is inevitably reminded of that oft quoted passage of Henry D. Thoreau, himself in spirit a near Friend: "If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away." In spite of appearances of negativity the Quaker concern is not so much against war as for peace and the things that make for peace. As the parallelism of the psalmist suggests, "Seek peace and pursue it" is synonymous with "Depart from evil and do good."

Beside refusing complicity in social evils like war and slavery Quaker independence expressed itself in the more familiar political forms so dear to free born Englishmen. They were quick to apply to their own concern the civil liberties they inherited, and to show the relevance of the fundamental laws of England to the matters on which they felt concern. William Penn was particularly sensitive to this, and beginning from the time of the famous trial in the Old Bailey he records in his writings the

application to matters of persecution, to colonial government whether in Pennsylvania or New Jersey, and to international affairs, of his British ideals of political libertarianism. One of the rarest of all his publications was a collection of the various charters of liberty under which Pennsylvanians might live if they claimed their rights with vigilance. It was entitled **The Excellent Priviledge of Liberty and Property being the Birth-Right of the Free Born Subjects of England** (William Bradford, Philadelphia, 1686).

The transfer of independence from one field to another is also characteristic of Friends. Fox is less politically minded than Penn and so he uses in a religious sense the phrase "free men." "God's free-men and women" is his recurrent term, in which he characteristically adds the other sex. When Friends became concerned about slavery they drew the analogy from cherished forms of freedom to what to us today would seem the more elementary form that chattel slavery denied. Thus religious freedom was the boast of early Pennsylvania but Pastorius and his compatriots in Germantown called attention to the inconsistency of holding men as slaves. They wrote in 1688, "Here is liberty of conscience, which is right and reasonable; here ought to be likewise liberty of the body . . . In Europe there are many oppressed for conscience' sake; and here there are those oppressed which are of a black color."

In 1783 nearly one hundred years later another Friend wrote a powerful pamphlet, "A Serious Address to the Rulers of America on the Inconsistency of their Conduct Respecting Slavery: Forming a Contrast between the Encroachments of England, on American Liberty, and American Injustice in Tolerating Slavery." The title that I have quoted is fully supported by quotations from the Declaration of Independence and similar revolutionary protests printed side by side with the actual ignoring of similar sentiments when applied to the Negro slave. Perhaps, as at other times, Friends' aloofness from the partisanship of war enabled them to see the

beam in their country's eye. This pamphlet, printed in Trenton, a masterpiece in moral logic, and signed merely "A Farmer," I have been able to identify as the work of David Cooper, a Haddonfield Friend.

There is an independence that is motivated by chronic stubbornness, and there is also independence that is loyalty to deeper principles, untrammelled by either coercion or convention. Mere temperamental negativeness is known in individuals and sometimes we think we see it in groups. For ourselves we should try to make sure that the right of protest, of dissent, and of civil disobedience is exercised with discrimination. I am afraid some Quaker habits have actually been due to love of being different for its own sake. Surely children who have heard the phrase quoted so often in this meeting house or elsewhere about a "peculiar people," have needed some correction of such a notion. It has been natural to connect not only the Quakers but the queries with the word "queer." Rather I would recommend that we reserve our capacity to resist to places where we can do so on principle, and not waste the manly right of independence on frivolous eccentricities that do not count. Undoubtedly the conscientious man has found that one good scruple leads to another, but the influence of scrupulosity ought to be conserved for significant issues.

A delicate question is how far independence is to be exploited for publicity value. No recent conscientious objector has been able to avoid this question. Was his protest aimed at influencing others? Or was it simply the outcome of his own quiet belief? In the latter alternative any effect on others would be secondary to his main concern.

There is reason to suppose that historically Quaker independence has had the latter motive. Perhaps just because it was so sincere, so without any suspicion of exhibitionism, it has had a subtle effect. Yet one cannot deny that from the earliest days Friends have had an eye for "public relations."

They saw to it that the injustices they suffered for nonconformity were brought home to the persecuting authorities, and to the general public as well. Early Quakerism had a large literature of Sufferings as forty-two pages in Smith's Catalogue of Friends Books under that heading testify.

There are, however, many inconspicuous examples, so inconspicuous that neither the martyr-complex nor the histrionic motive was involved. It is interesting when such episodes come belatedly to light. A few years ago I was looking at some papers inherited by a descendant from John Comly, the well known Friend from Byberry. One of them was a printed notice dated 1815 of sheriff sale of his home, for a small sum of back taxes. Neither family tradition nor his own printed Journal offered any explanation of this document. On the back in faint pencil the reason was given, "I refused because war tax."

Similarly I was looking up one day at the State Archives at Trenton wills that were connected with John Woolman, either as scrivener, witness, executor or appraiser. In a few hours I found some twenty-five wills in his own hand and a total record of some seventy technical actions by him on wills. One of them was an emphatic refusal of executorship. Why Woolman refused to serve as executor is not stated in the document nor does the Journal of Woolman refer to this event. I think the reason is probably to be found in a single entry in the inventory of the estate which is filed with the will. It reads

Negro Cate

£25-0-0

A conspicuous evidence of Quaker independence is our apparent refusal to take sides. We are familiar with minorities that are ardent adherents of unpopular sides of questions but Quakers have often baffled their contemporaries by their neutrality. There are many controversies in which the middle ground is the most rare and the most difficult to hold. We have this brought home to us again

and again in the political field or the international. It has been equally true in the ecclesiastical field. By being neither Protestant nor Catholic, neither episcopal nor presbyterian, Friends find themselves in a strange, perhaps a strategic position. How can we take sides on the mooted problems of ordination or of outward sacraments when we deny them altogether? And when efforts are made by the World Council of Churches to formulate a simple universally satisfactory phrase for the basis of faith we quietly propose that there be no formula at all. I am quite convinced that real independence often consists in refusing to deal with problems as rival factions present them, and in insisting that on a higher plane a constructive synthesis can be found. To the majority of men this is almost worse than open opposition. "He that is not for us is against us," they say, and they easily assume that because their opponents are wrong they themselves must be right. To expose this fallacy and perhaps to disagree with both sides is a useful and exasperating tendency of Quakerism.

How does such independence permit of any organized society? Does not the spirit that rebels against external customs and conventions prevent any internal unity and cohesion? Undoubtedly Quakerism in its history and at present has had this problem to face. It has either succumbed to this difficulty or has in some extraordinary way risen above it. Its mysticism, its negation of creed, its insistence on individual leading, would also seem to be incompatible with unity or continuity in any group. The problem that confronts the historian is not why Quakerism has had divisions or separations but rather why it has had so few,—two or three major ones in America and none of importance elsewhere. A second problem is why a society so indifferent to tradition, so little subject to preventives of change, instead of being snuffed out in a few years has proved the most durable of all the minor sects of the British Commonwealth, and has exercised so much influence within and against the other denominations.

At least part of the answer to these questions is to be found in the pervasive principle of consent. This is shown in the way in which the early Friends came to their position often independently. They were not so independent in fact as they felt themselves to be individually, for they had much common inheritance. Undoubtedly it was reassuring and cementing to them that often individuals found each other to be in agreement without any traceable link between them. Their missionary movement was not so much a campaign of converting the unconverted but rather of discovering like-minded persons who readily coalesced into the new movement. The more recent extension of Quakerism is probably strongest when it follows the same pattern. The older leaven of the Seeker movement was responsible for the recurrence in many areas of the same kind of scruples and the same response to Quakerism. Even what seemed like new scruples in the history of the Society emerged probably quite independently in different individuals. What little we know of the rise of pacifism in Quakerism confirms this impression. Separate individuals came quite without consultation to a like conclusion. I suspect Nayler and Fox and Dewsbury were independently travelling this way. Willem Sewel in his **History of the Quakers** (1722) says of the early days, "There were also some others, who, by the like immediate way, as George Fox himself, were convinced in their minds . . . These unexpectedly and unawares came to meet with fellow believers, which they were not acquainted with before." Also in later concerns not only do we see concurrence but often in successive episodes a striking similarity of Quaker response to similar situations where no influence of precedent seems to have been working. It is a feature somewhat similar to the conscious technique of a Friends' meeting for business where many if not most of the members feel that the decision of the group is equally their own personal decision.

As Quakerism has escaped authoritarianism on

the one hand so also it has avoided anarchy on the other. There have been some interesting studies of late on the role of the leader in Quakerism. The figure of George Fox is here of special interest, but even those who like Emilia Fogelklou-Norlind assign to him more dictatorial attitudes than I think are justified admit that he definitely gave up the opportunity to be the man of power and dethroned himself voluntarily from the kind of leadership to which he seemed destined. It has even been claimed that his leadership was editorially exaggerated and interpreted after his death so as to obscure the importance of some of his contemporaries. "Other churches were by tradition patriarchally organized," writes Mrs. Norlind, "Quakerism was born a democracy. I can find nowhere in the earlier history of religion a corresponding group of finders, not adherents."

As for contemporary Quakerism we still seem to be blessed with a very democratic attitude in this matter of leadership. There are of course men and women of influence in the Society, but they have little personal ambition and are not amenable to becoming the figurehead of a party. This self-effacement, provided it is not associated with indifference, laziness or unwillingness to put to use for the Society of Friends our utmost powers of serviceableness, will continue to prevent our Society from becoming a set of leaders and led, and will cherish the rights and duties of the humblest member and will promote the maximum opportunity for independence.

Very similar must be our answer to the problem of independence in the light of history. So often original experience creates a tradition which in turn kills both originality and experience. No one can claim that Quakerism has escaped this typical ossification. Too often we have been content to drift in what Whittier calls

"custom's oiled grooves."

We exaggerate our freedom from forms and creeds, and we quite easily deny ourselves our priceless heritage of freedom.

There is no easy cure for this unthinking or at least indiscriminate conservatism. But we may be thankful that so much of our tradition precisely emphasizes the recurrent freshness of religious experience. The Bible, the historical incarnation of Jesus Christ, the founding fathers of Quakerism, have never quite been given the finality that would make superfluous a new and independent comprehension of truth. So long as the demand for first hand religion is central in Quakerism the Society can never become wholly static. The continuity or uniformity comes rather in the unusual, not to say inverted, way of recognizing belatedly that our living experience coincides with the classical standards of the past. Those standards do not determine the experience, but the experience when it comes is likely to be interpreted by those standards. The important thing is that the experience should be real, and that there should be freedom in each generation to test it and to re-express it with a sincerity and freshness like that which the early Friends manifested.

This experiential religion—Fox would call it “experimental”—and its consequent freedom is well summarized in the passage in John’s Gospel: “Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.”

